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Chairman: Mr. Politi ..... (Italy)

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The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

Agenda item 172: Observer status for the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance in the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/C.6/55/L.14)

1. **The Chairman** suggested that the final clause of draft decision A/C.6/55/L.14, beginning with the words "and to include" and ending with the words "in the General Assembly", should be deleted.

2. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 184: Observer status for the Economic Community of Central African States in the General Assembly (A/C.6/55/3, A/55/237 and Add.1 and A/C.6/55/L.20)

3. **The Chairman** said that Côte d'Ivoire and Sao Tome and Principe had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.6/55/L.20.

4. **Mr. Esono Nsue Nchama** (Equatorial Guinea), introducing the draft resolution, said that, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Guinea, Italy, Mauritania, and the Republic of the Congo had joined the list of sponsors.

5. His delegation expressed its satisfaction at the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 55/22 concerning cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

6. His statement reflected the political will of the Heads of State and Government of ECCAS, as expressed at their summit held in Libreville on 23 June, and reaffirmed by the people's representatives at the Central African high-level parliamentary conference held from 1 to 3 November in Luanda.

7. Observer status was of singular importance to ECCAS. It would enable it to promote and maintain various initiatives for subregional integration and to strengthen its structures and programmes.

8. In that context, the Heads of State and Government of ECCAS had decided in June 1999 to include within the organization the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa. In addition, the Heads of State and Government of the subregion had decided to establish an early-warning mechanism, a subregional parliament and a subregional centre for human rights and democracy, all of which operated under the auspices of ECCAS.

9. The issues currently being discussed in the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa would become part of the new framework for direct cooperation between the United Nations and ECCAS. His delegation expressed appreciation for the valuable contribution made by that Committee in restoring trust among the States members of the Community.

10. After drawing attention to the draft resolution's two paragraphs, he expressed the hope that it could be adopted by consensus.

11. **Mr. Moussotsi** (Gabon) said that his delegation firmly supported the draft resolution and the introductory statement made by the representative of Gabon on behalf of the States members of the Community. His delegation wished to stress the importance of the relationship between the United Nations and ECCAS in view of the role played by both organizations in promoting development and peace. Granting observer status for the Community in the General Assembly would strengthen that relationship and enable ECCAS to benefit from the direct assistance of the United Nations. The goals of ECCAS were in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations. He was confident that Member States would support the draft resolution.

12. **Ms. Álvarez Nuñez** (Cuba) said that her delegation wished to join the list of sponsors of the draft resolution and hoped that it would promote cooperation between the United Nations and international non-governmental organizations supporting the principles of the Charter.

13. **Mr. Barthélemy** (France) said that ECCAS promoted regional integration in Africa, which was one of the keys to development and stability on the continent.

14. With regard to the criteria for the granting of observer status, laid down in General Assembly decision 49/426, ECCAS was an intergovernmental organization whose membership consisted solely of States. It had been established by treaty in 1983 and currently had 11 member States. The Community's activities were indisputably of interest to the United Nations. Those activities had expanded since its

inception; initially they had been focused on economic objectives, but since the beginning of the year, the Community had adopted more political objectives, such as peacekeeping in the region, human rights and democracy. Furthermore, like the Economic Community of West African States, it had established a peacekeeping body. The extension of its activities to peacekeeping implied a closer relationship with the General Assembly. In view of the foregoing, his delegation supported the granting of observer status.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.